While recognizing that some of the standards may pose difficulites for some developing countries wishing to ratify such a convention, we still strongly support this proposal, which will do much to ensure a healthy and safe workplace in the agricultural sector.

Demand for New Ministry for Industrial Rehabilitation

1338. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a representation from professional Workers' Trade Union Centre of India, Bangalore, requesting for setting up a new Ministry of Industrial Rehabilitation;

(b) if so, the grounds adduced for the demand; and

(c) the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The basic demand contained in the representation is for creation of a new Ministry for administrative control of sick and loss making Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs). The proposed new Ministry would rehabilitate those units which are revivable and effect closure where revival is not possible. The new Ministry would address the problems of employees rendered jobless by absorbing them in other PSUs or by giving them a liberal compensation to ensure minimum subsistence till such time as they get alternate employment.

(c) The rehabilitation of sick PSUs is being effectively pursued by individual Ministries having administrative control over them. Budgetary allocations, wherever necessary, are being given directly to these Ministries for rehabilitation of viable PSUs. The Government has recently revised the Voluntary Retirement Scheme to take better care of workers rendered surplus as a result of closure/restructuring of PSUs. Hence, there is no immediate need perceived for creation of a new Ministry for this purpose.

Payment of Less Wages to Tendu Leaves Labourers

†1339. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any instruction from the International Labour Organisation regarding payment of less wages to the Lakhs of Adivasi labourers who collect 'tendu' leaves in the West Vidarbha;

†The original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof together with the information regarding actual position in this respect; and

(c) the action Government are going to be taken in this connection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

ILO's criticism on India for hiding facts on child labour

1340. SHRI ABANI ROY:
PROF. M.M. AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether ILO has criticised India for trying to hide the truth about the country's child labourers mostly engaged in hazardous occupations;

(b) if so, whether Government have been deliberately hiding the exact number of child labourers engaged in hazardous occupations;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the exact number of child labourers in each State as on 31st July, 2000; and

(e) whether Government have proposed any comprehensive scheme and programme in this regard during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001; and

(f) the achievements in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) The Committee on Application of Standards of the International Labour Conference in June, 2000 noted Government of India's commitment to elimination of child labour. It urged the Government to step up its activities.

(b) and (c) Authentic information on Child Labour is generated during the decennial census. As per the 1991 census, the total number of working children in the country is 11.28 million.

(d) A statement showing number of working children in each state/UT as per 1991 census is given (*See* below).

(e) and (f) Government of India has been implementing two schemes, for rehabilitation of children withdrawn from work, namely the scheme of National Child Labour Projects (NCLP) and the scheme of Grant-in-aid to